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RUEHSJ/AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE 2012
RHMFISS/COMDT COGARD WASHINGTON DC
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RHMFISS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
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RHMFISS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC
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C O N F I D E N T I A L PANAMA 000366

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PM](#)
SUBJECT: PANAMA: FARC MEMBER DEMOBILIZES IN DARIEN: SIXTH
THIS YEAR

Classified By: Ambassador Barbara J. Stephenson for
reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

FARC Demobilizations Continue

¶1. (U) Reports indicate that a member of the FARC's 57th FRONT surrendered to members of Panama's National Frontier Service (SENAFRONT) on May 2. The event took place at the newly established SENAFRONT position in the village of Sobia Quiro, near the Colombian boarder. The temporary position was established two weeks ago. La Prensa, Panama's newspaper of record, quoted Minister of Government and Justice Dilio Arcias on May 6 as saying that the alleged guerrilla, named XXXXXXXXXXXX, had crossed the border to surrender and arrived without a weapon or uniform. He reportedly asked to be placed in the Government of Colombia's demobilization program. Chimán is the sixth member of the FARC to demobilize in Panama this year, and SENAFRONT is implementing a small scale information campaign to encourage more members of the FARC to demobilize.

Comment

¶2. (C) Members of the FARC's 57th Front are demobilizing in Panama despite their belief that SENAFRONT mistreats FARC members they capture, as revealed in the debriefs of previously demobilized FARC members. This is a clear indication that morale is not high in the 57th. Combined with the small size of the 57th, which we believe number at most 180, there would seem to be a real possibility of weakening the 57th by encouraging demobilizations. To this end, Post has invited a Military Information Support Team (MIST) from SOCSOUTH to Panama to develop an effective information campaign aimed at the FARC. President Torrijos has given permission for the team to work with SENAFRONT in the Darien to encourage demobilization and return to Colombia, where the GOC has promised the GOP that all FARC members turned over to them will be allowed into the demobilization program. This is another indication that the GOP is serious about weakening the FARC in Panama, and is taking bold and creative moves to make it happen.
STEPHENSON